

R E P O R T

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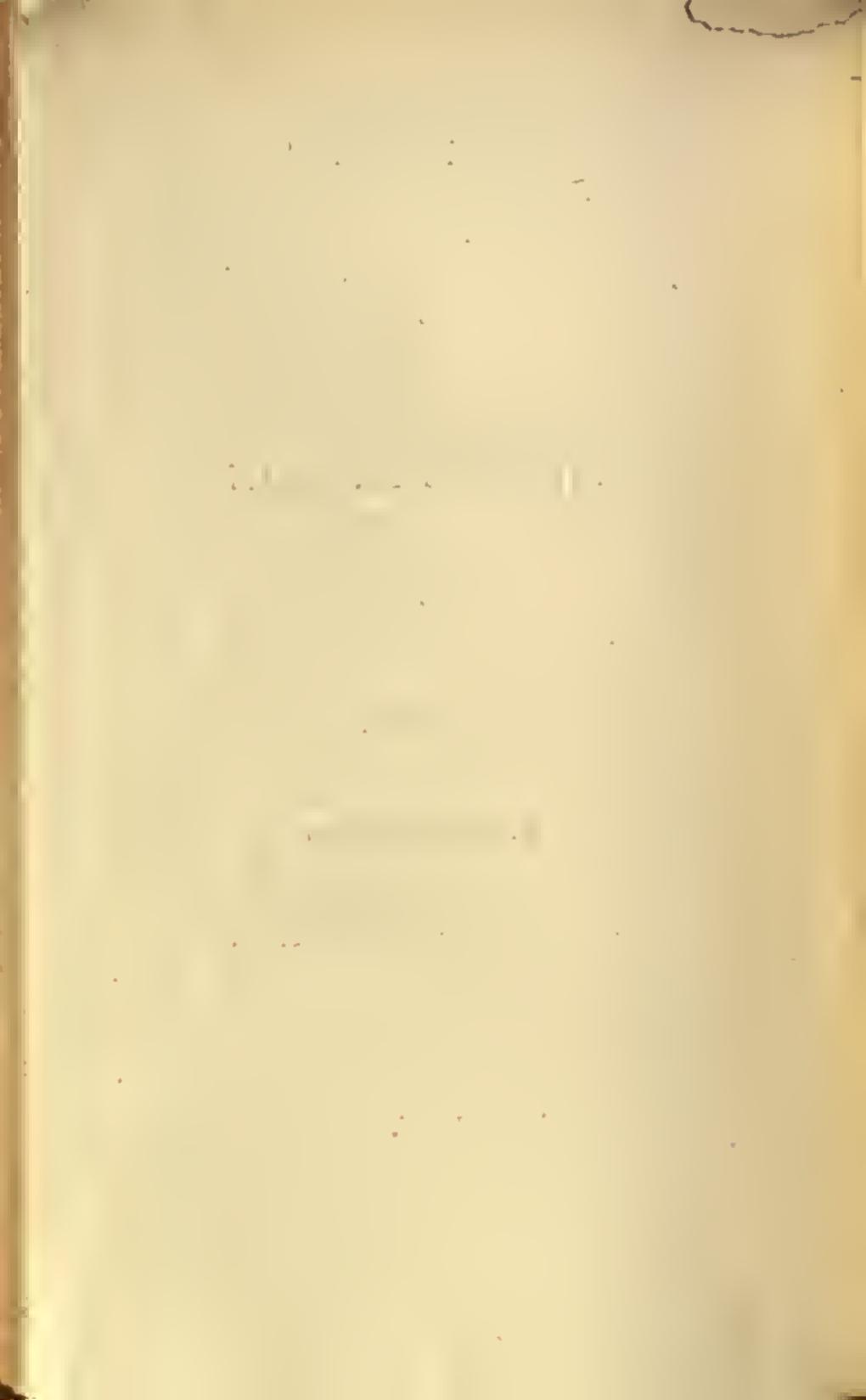
CHINESE MISSION

AT

MALACCA.

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1826.



R E P O R T &c.

There are various encouraging aspects in which attempts to unfold Divine Truth to the Heathen exhibit themselves to the Christian, whose bosom burns with love to God and zeal for the welfare of men. To such an one what employment more exalted and ennobling than planting the Cross of Christ in the midst of pagan idolatry and antichristian delusion. The very idea of directing the wayward wanderer, in the midst of his superstition and folly, to the foot of the Cross, is calculated to produce the deepest impressions of delight and the highest anticipations of happiness. In many instances such sentiments are cherished, without suspicion of their not being immediately realized, until their possessor actually arrives at the field of labour, and submits to the correcting influence of experience. The more than stoical indifference with which the Heathen in some countries hear the Gospel, is sufficient to paralyze every benevolent effort on their behalf that has not proceeded from divinely implanted principles. To remain at his post in the midst of pressing difficulties and continued discouragements, is perhaps as fine an exemplification of the Missionary's enterprize and confidence, as unweariedly to pursue his career after some considerable conquests have already been obtained. At some stations, more than others, the labourer must go forth weeping bearing precious seed, without the prospect soon to return rejoicing and bringing his sheaves with him. This appears peculiarly to be our case; and will no doubt be too discoverable in the following brief account of our proceedings to need distinct notice here:—as usual we commence with

PREACHING. During the past year, places have been opened in three different parts of the Town of Malacca, for the purpose of communicating religious instruction to the Chinese in the Fokéén Dialect; the attendance rarely exceeds seven or eight persons. As usual, there are three services on the Sabbath in the College Hall, and one on a week day at a small heathen Temple in Malacca. It is indeed

"the day of small things" with oral instruetion amongst this people; and we fear it will be long before they assemble in considerable numbers to worship God on his own day. The attempt which has been made will be continued, in the hope of its sooner or later being crowned with distinguished success. A combination of various means, without relying on any particular branch of instruction, seems the best adapted to the present state of the Chinese Colonies. In anticipation, however, of that happy period when stated congregations of Christian Chinese shall be as common as assemblies of Europeans in our day, we have projected and commenced the building of a "Native Mission Chapel." Our wishes were no sooner made known than they were met by the cordial approbation of W. S. Ciacroft Esq, then Acting Resident of Malacca, who kindly presented us with the liberal donation of a hundred dollars to the object on his own account, and a provisional one of three hundred on the part of the Honorable East India Company, which according to their usual liberality has since been confirmed and paid. These donations were succeeded by others from the gentlemen of Malacca and different parts of India to a very respectable amount, to whom we take this public opportunity of expressing our grateful acknowledgments. The building has proceeded as far as the roof; and will be finished as soon as opportunity is afforded of obtaining timber from the interior, which has been delayed some time for want of rain. It is to be regretted that further recourse must be had to the liberality of the Public, to assist us in defraying the expence which will yet be incurred; but we feel confident that the benevolent design of erecting a house to the honor of God in this Heathen Country, will not be counteracted by the want of pecuniary aid, since, we doubt not, it has the special sanction of him who calls the gold and the silver his own. It is intended that Divine service shall be conducted in the above mentioned Chapel, principally in Chinese, but not to the exclusion of Malay should it afterwards be deemed expedient. To our friends in India and England we respectfully direct our attention with the hope that they will enable us to complete the Chapel; for which purpose about eight hundred dollars more are wanting. The service on Sabbath Evenings in the Malay language is still continued.

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS. The following is a list of the number of books distributed during the past year. Chinese Bibles 105. Testaments 156. Detached books of the Scriptures: viz. Genesis 36. Joshua 20. Psalms 500. Proverbs 155. Minor Prophets 29. Prayer Books 185. First Homily 262. Second Do. 340. Milne's Commentary on the Ephesians 295. Milne's Essay on the Soul 281. Hymn Books 280. Tracts 6000. Sheet Tracts 10,000—Single numbers of Mr. Medhurst's Magazine and Tracts 8080. Although no instances of actual usefulness, from the circulation of books and tracts, have hitherto come to our knowledge, we cannot but indulge the hope, that Divine Truth is gradually insinuating itself into the minds and consciences of those with whom it is thus constantly coming in contact. As the written character of China speaks all dialects to those who are able to read, there is perhaps as much encouragement to proceed in providing religious books for this nation as any other people under heaven. The meaning of the character will find its way, through the medium of the eye, to the understandings of Chinese who really cannot speak intelligibly to each other. Very ample scope is therefore furnished for usefulness in this department of labour.

N. B. By far the greater part of the above Books have been given to China-men who have come from a distance to solicit them.

The following is a list of books printed since June 1825. Bibles 125. Testaments 200. Tracts 3600. Sheet Tracts 11,000. Blocks have been cut for the greater part of a new Edition of the Testament, and for a small book containing a compendious view of Christian Theology. The former, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the latter at the expense of a friend.

The Bible and Tract Societies have respectively borne the expense of the Bibles and Tracts which have been printed, for whose very liberal pecuniary assistance we desire to tender our sincere thanks. A small book in English and Chinese, and an abridgment of Sacred History in English, have been printed at the expense, and for the use, of the Anglo-Chinese College. Some English Lectures by Dr. Morrison have likewise been printed. The following is a list of books on hand—Bibles 30. Testaments 128. Milne's Commentary on the Ephesians 205. Milne's Essay on the Soul 169. Hymn Books 730. Prayer Books 245. First Homily 338. Second Homily 60. Genesis 4. Exodus 49. Leviticus 14. Numbers 13. Deu-

teronomy 23. Samuel 12. Proverbs 145. Jeremiah 4. Daniel 20. Minor Prophets 31. Tracts 6168.

SCHOOLS. The number of scholars has rather diminished in consequence of the sickness and mortality prevalent throughout the greater part of last year. There are at present about two hundred boys on the books. They have been employed in committing to memory portions of native and Christian books on week days; Catechisms and other religious books on Sabbath days; and on a Sabbath afternoon in reciting and explaining select portions of Scripture, or original composition, previously prepared for them. Our hopes centre very strongly in this department of Missionary labour, since it appears one of the most likely means of procuring from amongst the Chinese inhabitants of Malacca a generation to serve God. In addition to our Schools, which are seven in number, there are three others established by the Chinese themselves probably from a wish to have them exclusively under their own direction. Hence we hope as a better instructed generation is rising into life, the lamentable effects of ignorance, which are too visible in Malacca at the present time, will soon cease to exist. It is exceedingly difficult to communicate religious instruction to uneducated adults—they have but a very imperfect acquaintance with their own language, and their understandings are scarcely accessible to the meaning of religious terms. These evils we hope will gradually disappear in proportion to the progress of knowledge, both human and divine, on the minds of the young.

The Tamil School mentioned in the last report has been discontinued on account of not having a sufficient number of Scholars.

SAMARITAN SOCIETY. Eleven persons are at present receiving support from this Society. During the past year it has afforded assistance in burying two or three Chinese, who were so exceedingly poor and friendless as to be unable, otherwise, to obtain the means of sepulture. Medicine is given as usual to natives who require it.

Thus the records of another year have only exhibited the same elementary work in Chinese as on preceding occasions. Perseveringly to labour and patiently to wait for success, seem eminently necessary in Ultra-Ganges India where superstition and folly are en-

trenched within the strong ramparts of pride and ignorance. To a cursory observer the prospect of universally diffusing Christianity may seem at a long and dreary distance; but those who, on the authority of God, wait for the influences of the Spirit to accomplish this happy event, its ultimate triumphs are equally certain and glorious. Even now the secret influence of that power which can alone subdue all things to itself, may have commenced its efficacious though hidden work on many who have read of the way of salvation, by means of the Scriptures and tracts which have been circulated amongst them, to whom instruction by the living voice in the principles of the Christian religion has never been communicated. Certain it is that means are already in operation, in almost every part of the world, which will sooner or later occasion the universal shout "Hallelujah the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

JAMES HUMPHREYS }
 DAVID COLLIE }
 SAMUEL KIDD } MISSIONARIES

Malacca
July 1826.

